



News Release

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Department Issues \$32.5 Million For School Repairs And Infrastructure Improvements

More than \$32.5 million to assist school districts as they improve school infrastructure will be issued today to 107 Michigan school districts, according to the Michigan Department of Education.

The 2001-02 School Renovation, IDEA, and Technology Grant Program is a competitive, one-time, federal grant program designed to help local school districts make school repairs and renovations, and meet special education and renovation-related technology expenses.

"We're very pleased to announce these grants for school districts that desperately need infrastructure improvements. They underscore the critical importance of improving our neighborhood public schools," said Tom Watkins, Michigan Superintendent of Public Instruction. "We have buildings in this state that are in desperate need of repair and improvements - some buildings don't just leak vertically, but they also leak horizontally. These grant dollars are a crucial first step toward enhancing all school facilities in our Great State."

Michigan has been allocated \$43.89 million for this worthwhile program. The grants issued today represent all allocated Category 1 - Urgent School Repairs funding for the program. The Department will soon issue a second round of grants for the remainder of the funding that specifically addresses infrastructure activities related to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and technology improvement.

"Educational environment is a significant factor for student achievement, and I am very pleased that the federal government is recognizing this crucial facility need," said Herbert S. Moyer. "The amount, unfortunately, only addresses the tip of the iceberg in terms of need. I hope our Legislature will help us address this on a more comprehensive basis."

Although the Department of Education issued every dollar allocated by the federal government for the program, Michigan school districts requested more than \$68.2 million for this category.

"We simply couldn't fund every request that we received, and almost every single grant application was worthy of funding," Watkins said. "Our resources to assist with these problems are finite, but we are absolutely committed to fighting for every grant dollar available to improve Michigan schools."

Approximately 47 percent of the funding, or \$15.31 million, was allocated to high poverty local and intermediate school districts, and public school academies.

"We would ask the Legislature to provide more resources and bring school building repair priorities in this state on par with the emphasis they placed on sewer infrastructure a short time ago," Watkins said.

A complete list of schools that were funded is attached to this news release. The list is also available on-line at www.michigan.gov/mde.